

GET INVOLVED

Comment Period

June 9 – July 9, 2025

Hybrid Public Meeting

June 30, 5:30 p.m. PT
Richland Public Library

Send comments by
July 9

324_ProposedPlan@rl.gov

Administrative Record

bit.ly/42icWre

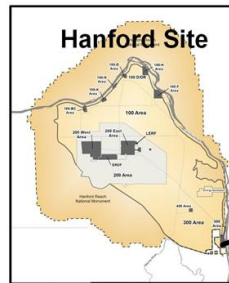
Questions?

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The U.S. Department of Energy ([DOE](#)) and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency ([EPA](#)) are holding a 30-day public comment period and hybrid meeting on a proposed plan for amending the cleanup approach for the 300-296 waste site and 324 Building in Hanford's 300 Area.

Background

Hanford's 324 Building supported research on radioactive materials from 1966 to 1996. In 2010, workers discovered contamination under the building, assessed to be the result of a spill of highly radioactive material in the mid-1980s. This area was designated as the 300-296 waste site.

As crews readied the 324 Building for soil cleanup, DOE and EPA gained an updated understanding of the site conditions. Based on this new information, the agencies determined the cleanup plan as originally envisioned and outlined in a 2013 record of decision (ROD) could not be executed.

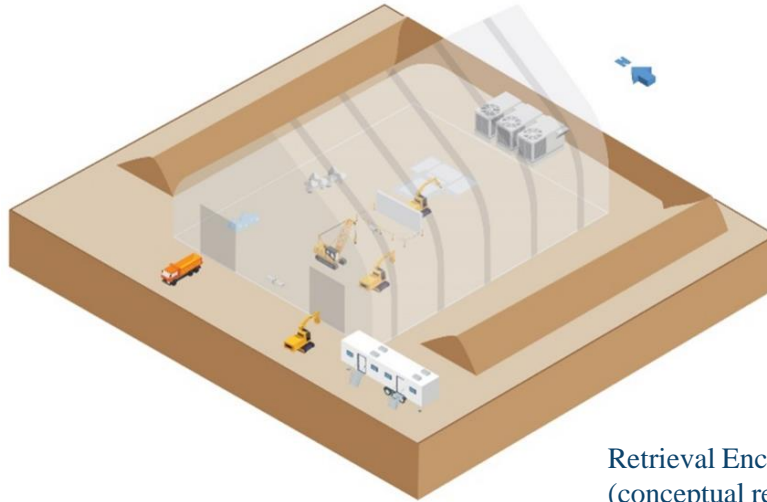
DOE and EPA jointly launched an evaluation of options to address the contamination and move cleanup forward, identifying two alternatives as part of a Focused Feasibility Study.

DOE and EPA look forward to public input to help inform a decision about which alternative to implement with a comment period set to begin in June. After receiving comments, the agencies will issue an amended ROD that will include a responsiveness summary addressing comments.

As this process continues, the 324 Building remains in a safe and stable configuration. Contaminated soils beneath the structure have remained stable for decades and monitoring indicates no migration into the groundwater.



Summary of Alternatives



Retrieval Enclosure Concept
(conceptual rendering)

Summary of Alternatives

The use of remote excavation remains the fundamental method for addressing the 300-296 waste site, and the cleanup objectives from the 2013 ROD remain the same. As part of the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA) process, the agencies developed two modified cleanup approaches for evaluation through a Focused Feasibility Study – a Coupled Alternative and a Decoupled Alternative. Under both alternatives the contaminated soil will be treated and safely disposed on the Hanford site.

Coupled Alternative

The Coupled Alternative starts with shoring up the 324 Building and replacing aging equipment. Excavation equipment installed within the Building will remove as much highly contaminated soil that can be reached safely. Then the 324 Building will be demolished and a temporary waste retrieval enclosure (see image above) would be built over the waste site to support final remediation to achieve cleanup levels. This approach is estimated to take 12 years at a cost of \$438 million.

Decoupled Alternative (Preferred)

The Decoupled Alternative begins with the demolition of the 324 Building, followed by remediation of the waste site under a temporary waste retrieval enclosure (see image above). This approach provides a safer path for the workforce while reducing risks posed by further equipment or infrastructure failure in the aging 324 Building. This approach is estimated to take 8.5 years at a cost of \$202 million.

Based on the results of the Study, the Decoupled Alternative is the preferred option providing the best balance of tradeoffs based on the evaluation criteria. This is the safest approach for workers. It also achieves cleanup sooner, while costing American taxpayers less.

Public Involvement

A 30-day public comment period will run June 9 through July 9, 2025. A hybrid public meeting will be held June 30, at 5:30 p.m. PT, at the Richland Public Library, 955 Northgate Drive, Richland, WA 99352. It will include a presentation on the proposed plan along with a question-and-answer session. During the hybrid meeting, you can view the presentation, hear the speakers and ask questions. To participate via Microsoft Teams, please follow the instructions below:

Join on your computer or Teams mobile app

bit.ly/4kQGgfQ

Or call in (audio only)

[\(509\) 931-1284](tel:(509)931-1284) United States

[\(833\) 633-0875](tel:(833)633-0875) United States (Toll-free)

Phone Conference ID: 156 530 249#

All comments must be submitted by July 9, in writing, 324_ProposedPlan@rl.gov, (preferred) or mail to:

Dana Cowley

U.S. Department of Energy

P.O. Box 450, H5-20

Richland, WA 99352

324_ProposedPlan@rl.gov (preferred)

At the conclusion of the 30-day public comment period, DOE and EPA will address public comments and publish a responsiveness summary in the amended record of decision.

Copies of the proposed plan and supporting documentation will be available online during the public comment period in the Administrative Record <https://pdw.hanford.gov/document/AR-34152>. Hanford Public Information Repository locations are listed at <https://pdw.hanford.gov/page/PIRs>.

Please contact Dana Cowley dana_c_gribble@rl.gov or (509) 376-1188 at least 10 working days prior to the event to request disability accommodation. DOE makes every effort to honor accommodation requests.



Dana Cowley
U.S. Department of Energy
P.O. Box 450, H5-20
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Public Involvement Opportunity

We want to hear from you.

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